



# AMERICAN LIBRARY ASSOCIATION

~~NATIONAL RELATIONS OFFICE~~

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LIBRARY SERVICE TO LABOR

## NEWS LETTER

Dorothy Bendix, Chairman  
Joint Committee on Library Service to Labor Groups  
5 Washington Street, Newark 1, N. J.

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### REPORT ON MEETING OF JOINT COMMITTEE

On Saturday, February 26th, 1949, the Committee held a meeting in New York. Present were: Dorothy Bendix, Chairman; John Connors, George T. Guernsey, and Paul Howard.

The discussion resulted in a number of decisions dealing with the following points:

#### I. Organization of Meetings on Library Service to Labor at Regional Library Conferences.

The Committee agreed that it would be most desirable to have a program on Library Service to Labor at all seven regional meetings. The Adult Education Section of the Public Libraries Division of A.L.A. will be asked to co-sponsor these programs. Details of the program will be worked out according to the specific situation in each region. However, it was felt desirable to have a labor representative in addition to one or more librarians on the program, and to give adequate attention to the Labor Extension Bill.

#### II. The Labor Extension Bill and its Implications for Library Service to Labor.

It was agreed that wide publicity in library publications would be desirable. The point was stressed that the growth of the workers' education program after passage of the bill will result in more requests from unions for library service, and that libraries would be wise to prepare for such a situation both in terms of resources in the labor field and in terms of library personnel qualified for such special service.

#### III. Training Librarians for Library Service to Labor

The Committee agreed that a special training institute for librarians at one of the existing labor schools and a shorter institute at the A.L.A. Conference in Washington, D. C. should be planned for 1950. Because of lack of time for adequate preparation, existing facilities will have to be used this year.

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Two aspects of such institutes seem particularly valuable:

- 1) The experience of living and studying together with union people.
- 2) The acquisition of background information on labor history, collective bargaining, etc., which is necessary equipment for librarians planning to serve labor.

Information about labor institutes to be held this year is now being collected and will be published in an early NEWSLETTER.

#### IV. Cooperation of Public Libraries with University Workers' Education Projects.

The Chairman was authorized to write a letter to all universities and colleges carrying on workers' education programs. In this letter it will be pointed out how important it is to make use of public library service, and suggestions will be made as to how this can best be done.

#### V. Publication Program

- 1) Three more case studies will be issued with forthcoming NEWSLETTERS: Akron, New York City, and a small industrial community still to be chosen. These six studies will then be re-issued for wider distribution.
- 2) After the publication of the case studies detailed discussions of various phases of library service to labor will be issued as supplements to the NEWSLETTER.
- 3) The plan still is to publish a pamphlet including all this preliminary material in printed form.
- 4) The Committee hopes that some time during 1949 an article in the A.L.A. BOOKLIST may be devoted to books on labor.

#### VI. Questionnaires

Dorothy Bendix reported that the questionnaires on the use of the public library by union members obtained last summer at the University of Wisconsin School for Workers and some CIO Summer Schools are now being analyzed statistically by students at Columbia University.

Another sample will be obtained shortly representing rank-and-file union members, since the first sample comprised mostly local union officers.

Results of these studies will be reported later in the NEWSLETTER.

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#### BIBLIOGRAPHY ON LABOR-MANAGEMENT RELATIONS

The Institute of Labor and Industrial Relations, University of Illinois (704 S. Sixth Street, Champaign, Illinois), is issuing a monthly list of selected readings on Labor-Management Relations for high school students and teachers. Vol. 1, No. 1 came out in November, 1948.

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Each issue is devoted to one subject, such as Industrial Peace, Labor and Management Organizations, and the Taft-Hartley Act. In addition, a few Current Articles are listed. "Such factors as impartial treatment, readability, and availability of the material in the high school or public library" are considered in the selection.

Mr. Ralph E. McCoy, Research Associate and Reference Librarian, informed us that interested librarians may be put on the mailing list by writing to him at the above address.

Please keep us informed of any bibliographies on labor that you put out. We shall pass the information along.

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#### LIBRARY PARTICIPATES IN HIGH SCHOOL-LABOR PROJECT

During the past month the Newark Public Library has participated in an interesting experiment.

AFL labor leaders went into the senior history classes of East Side High School in Newark for one week and presented "a factual picture of labor's role in the building of America into the world's greatest industrial nation". The subjects covered were: labor history, collective bargaining, labor legislation, labor and politics, and labor and the community.

The Essex Trades Council arranged this program with the approval of Newark's Superintendent of Schools and other school officials.

The Library took part in two aspects of this project:

- 1) Dorothy Bendix attended the series of four training sessions which were held for the labor "professors" under the auspices of the Labor Program of the Rutgers University Institute of Management and Labor Relations. She took books and pamphlets dealing with the subject of the evening and lent them to the participants.
- 2) The Library cooperated with the Librarian of East Side High School by supplying an exhibit under the heading LABOR YESTERDAY - TODAY - TOMORROW. It illustrates the progress the organized labor movement has made over the years. Books, pamphlets, and magazines by and about trade unions were also supplied.

All of this material was sent to the school for a period of three weeks, which included preparation time for this project. The school librarian reported that the material received a great deal of use.

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#### LABOR-LIBRARIANS MEETING

At the Washington's Birthday Workers' Education Conference, sponsored by American Labor Education Service and held in New York on February 26-27, a preliminary meeting was devoted to a discussion of how libraries can best serve union educational needs. A small group of librarians, union educational directors, and labor program personnel from universities got together and explored their common interests.

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Among the problems discussed were readability and suitability, location and servicing of reading materials, and information services available in libraries.

A more detailed report will be issued later.

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ANY NEWS?

Please let us have news of your library-labor activities so that we may exchange ideas and projects and, in that way, can benefit by one another's experience.

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